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Kentucky Fried Libraries: Battered and Chewed Up in the Digital Marketplace

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*University of Maryland
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Committee on Institutional Cooperation



RUTGERS



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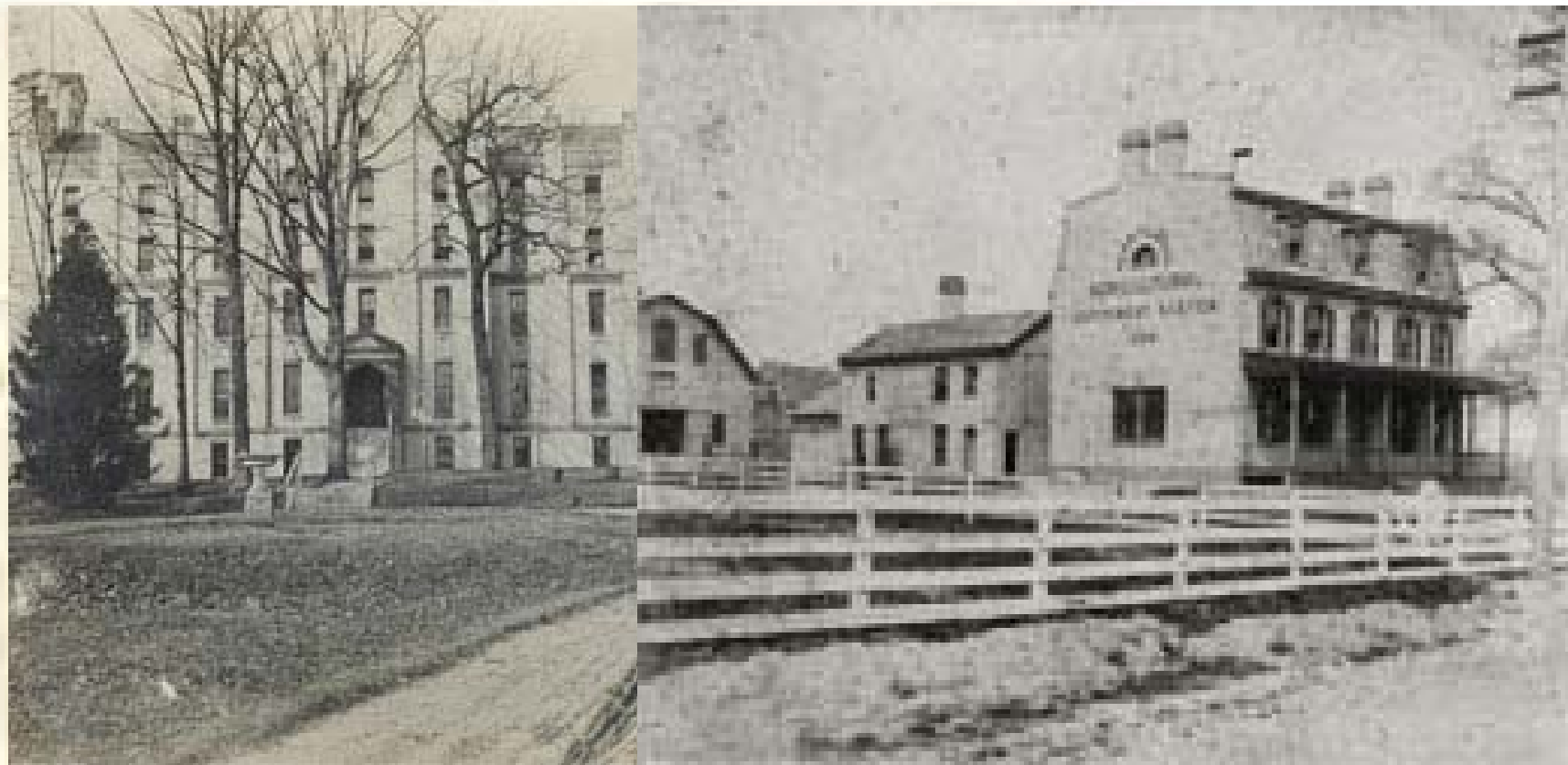


UNIVERSITY OF
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Lincoln®

A-maizing libraries



Marylanders get busy



And beautiful libraries



Librarians are builders too



**So the provost sent
money**



**And the vendors
swarmed around the
libraries**



**And the farmers came to
read and learn.**



Size ~~Matters~~ Used to Matter



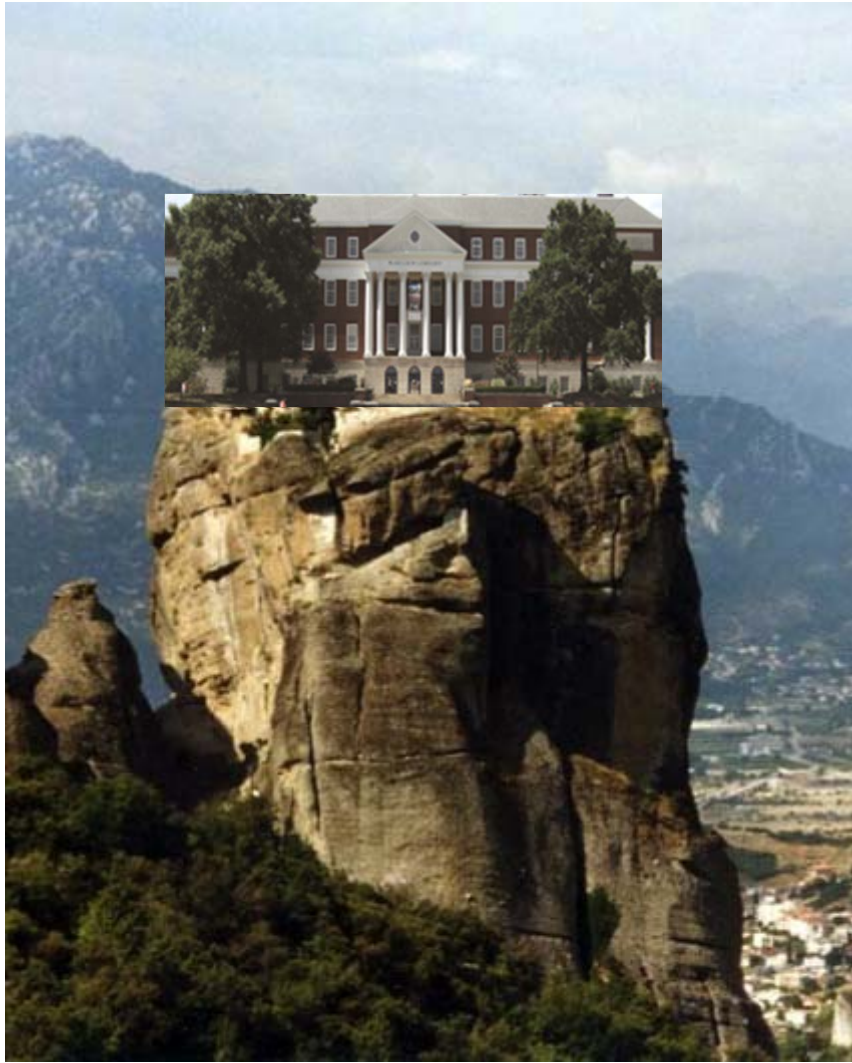
Omnis Sed Pessimus Litteraturae



Meteora, Greece



A shrine to knowledge



Isolated

Protected

Orthodox

Monopolistic

Expensive

Sacred

Autonomous



Back in Black...and doing the lord's work





One Ringy Dingy, Two Ringy Dingy

“You see, this phone system consists of a multibillion-dollar matrix of space age technology that is so sophisticated even we can't handle it. But that's your problem, isn't it? So, the next time you complain about your phone service, why don't you try using two Dixie cups with a string? We don't care. We don't have to. We're the Phone Company”



amazon

Google



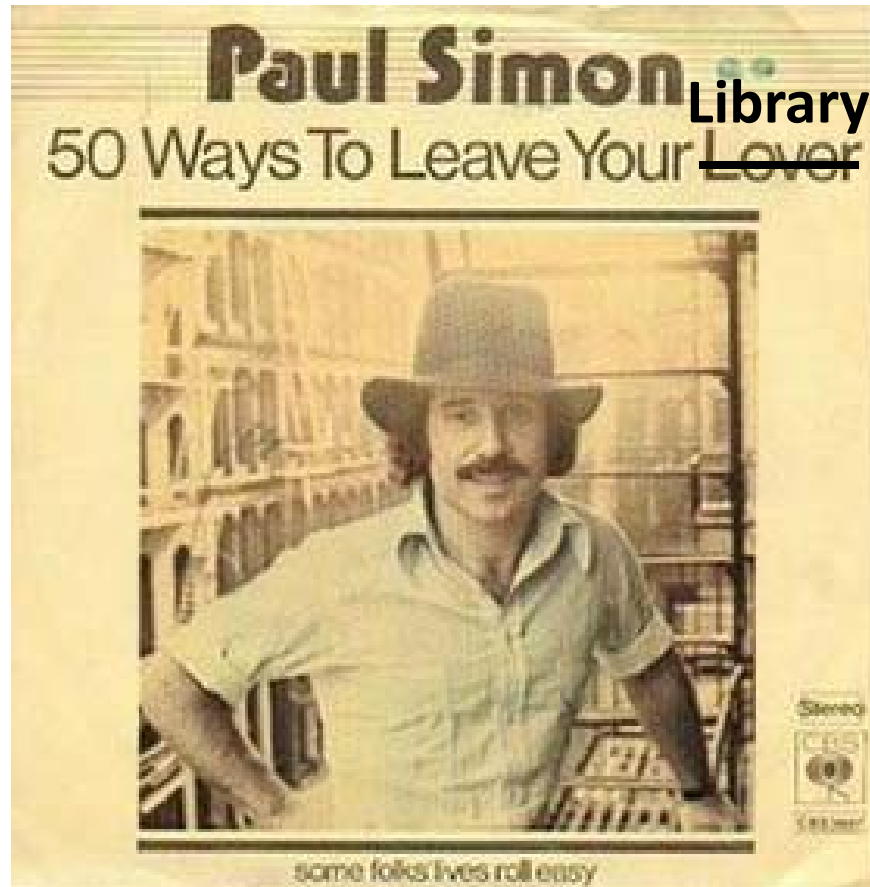
WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia



nature
publishing
group



Disintermediation hurts



- **Amazon**
- **Google**
- **Google Scholar**
- **HathiTrust**
- **JSTOR**
 - **Early Journal Content**
 - **Register and Read**
- **YouTube**
- **Wikipedia**
- **DeepDyve**
- **Blogs**
- **Twitter**
- **Facebook**
- **arXiv**
- **P2P Filesharing**
- **Vouchers**



Are libraries toast?



Probably not...

...but they are feeling the HEAT



Perverse Incentives

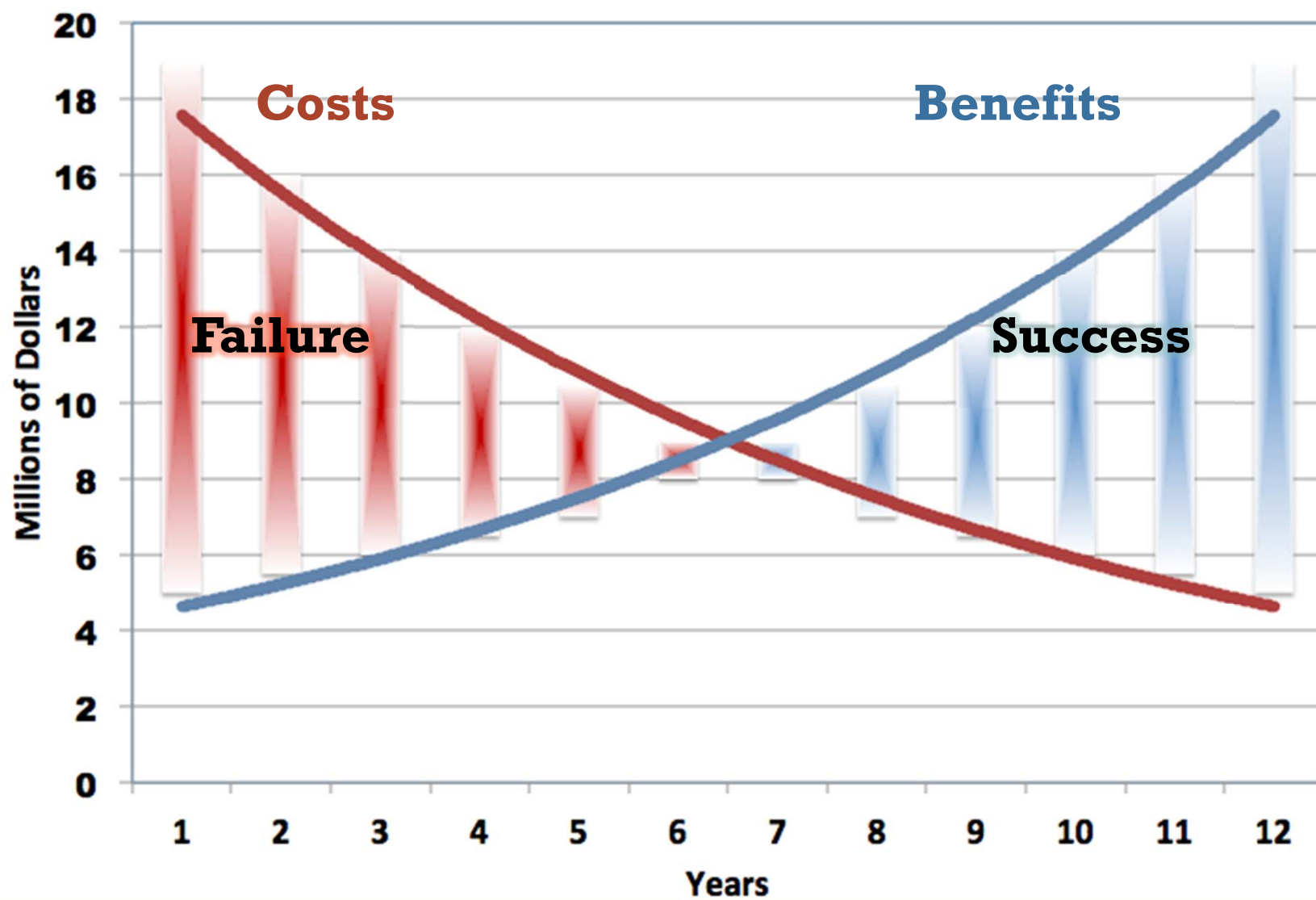
- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| • Collection size | Current subscriptions |
| • Unique items | Local systems |
| • Perfect metadata | More staff |
| • Bigger buildings | Bigger budgets |

Who benefits from **bigger** library budgets?

Libraries don't need more money....

**THEY NEED MORE USER UPTAKE AND
GREATER USER ENGAGEMENT**

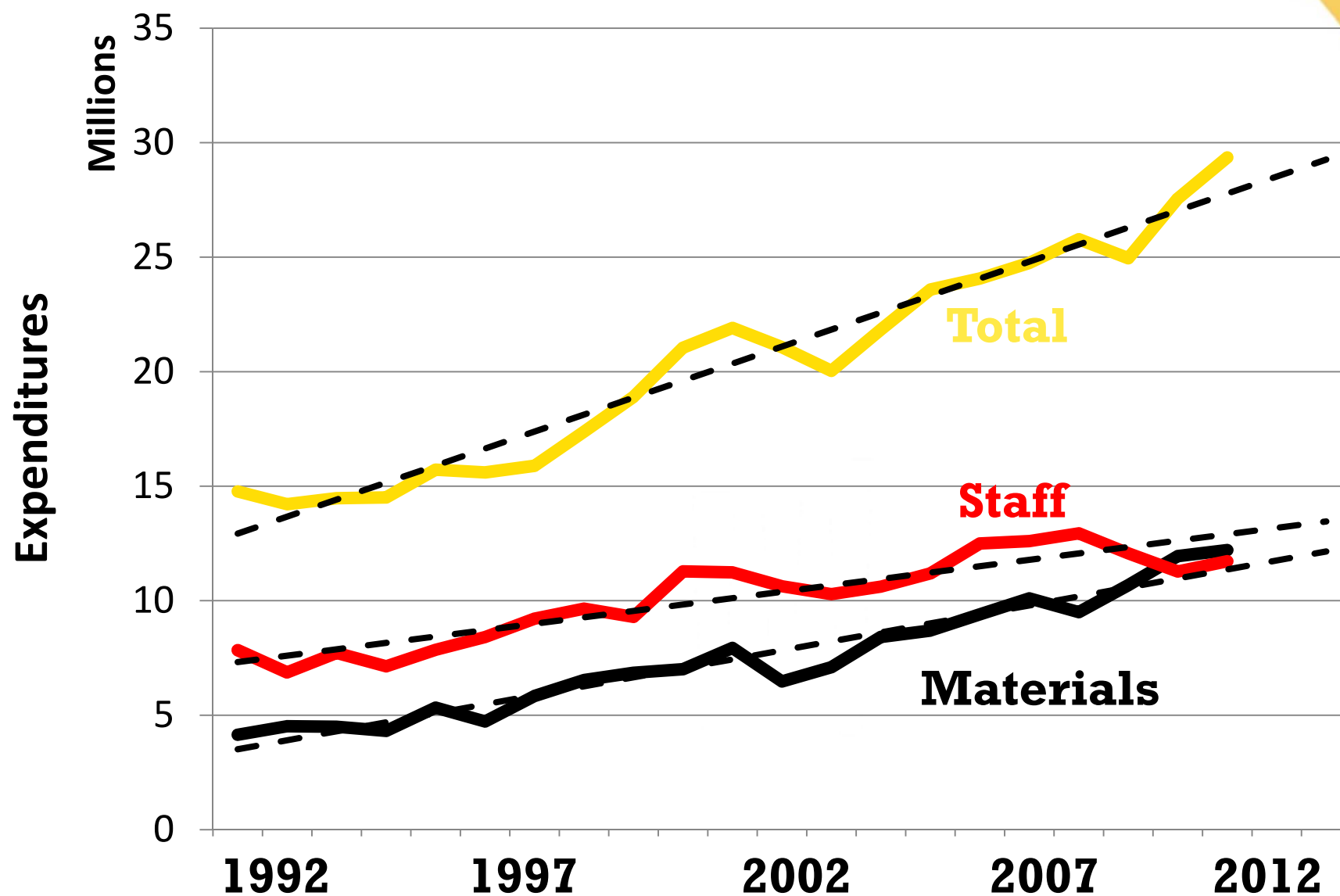
Out of the Red



Follow the money



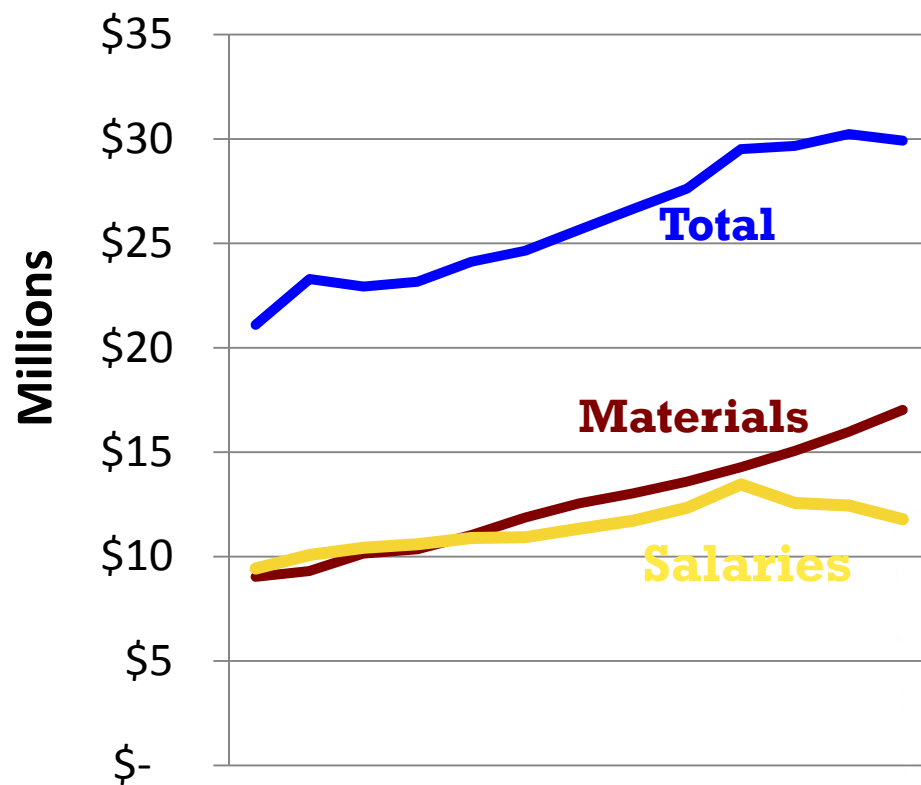
UMD Expenditures: 1992-2012



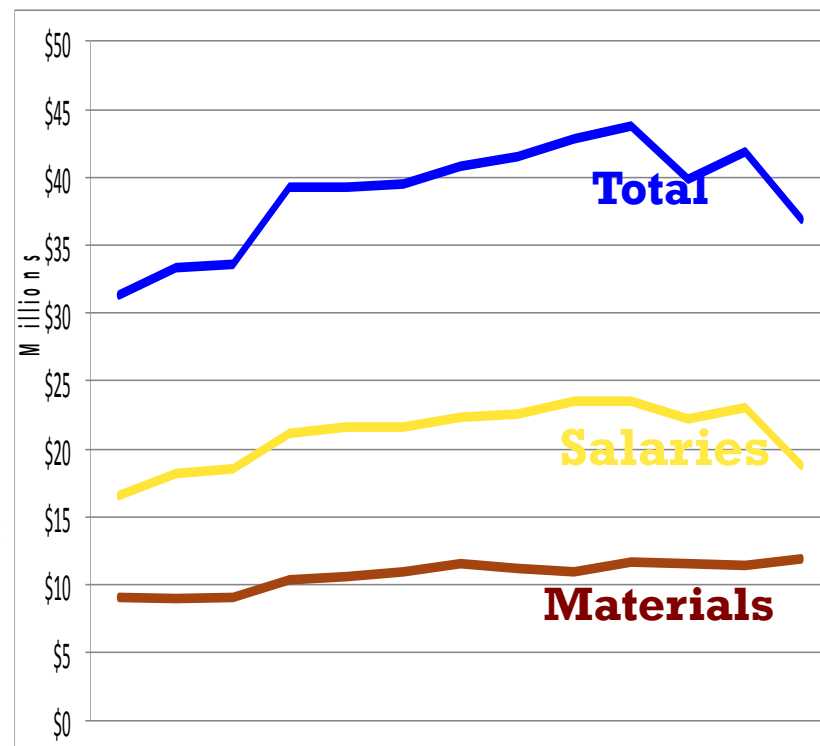
Iowa and UW Expenditures: 2000-2012



IOWA



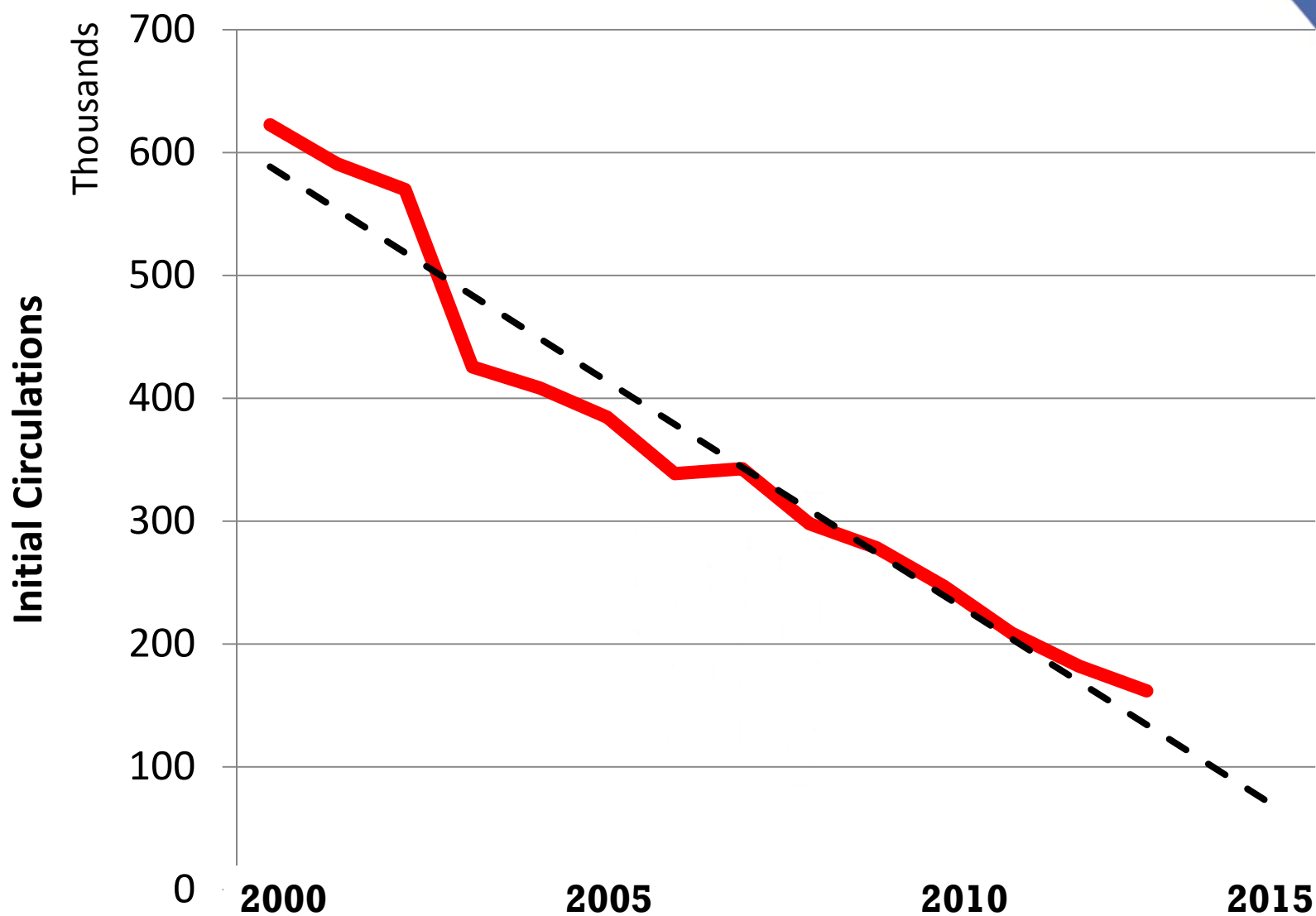
WISCONSIN



Check it out!



UMD Initial Circulations: 2000-2013



What provosts want



Crank up the benefits

Clamp down on costs

- **Eliminate operational inefficiencies**
- **Reduce back-office expenditures**
- **Divest of low-value standards and services**
- **Seek out “at scale” opportunities to manage operational functions**



Get small locally by going big nationally



Build partnerships

Shed operational costs through investments in shared infrastructure

Eliminate redundancy

Scale up and out

Shift cost at every opportunity from low-value, back-office activity to customer-facing activities

Imitate, assimilate, and aggregate



Google Digitization
Documents Digitization
HathiTrust
Licensing
Large-Scale Acquisitions
Shared Print Repository
Resource Sharing
Scholarly Communication



More generally:

- **Return savings**
- **Leverage unique resources**
- **Seed innovation**
- **Amplify CIC voices**



Kentucky Fried Libraries



Independence and autonomy are **not our friends**

Differentiation—in most areas—is not our friend

**Hatching new models for
library management**

Franchises

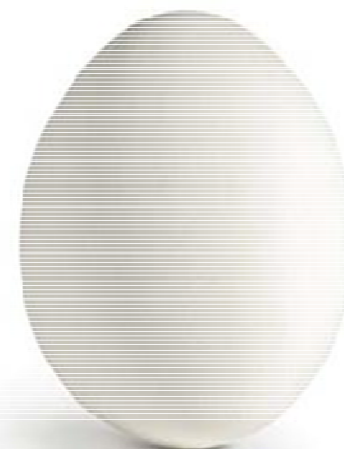
Chains

Mergers and acquisitions

Buyer's coops

Partnerships

Wholly owned subsidiaries



An “At-Scale” Library Vision



- ◆ Shifting gears—and resources—to more centralized work groups
- ◆ Think of ourselves as part of a national infrastructure for managing scholarly resources
- ◆ Replace local practice with integrated standards

Cataloging?
Preservation?
Archiving?
Selection?

Publishing?
Information Technology?
Digitization?
Licensing?



A One-Two knockout punch



POW!

A red starburst graphic with multiple points, containing the word 'POW!' in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font with a black outline.

Team up to cut costs



BAM!

A green starburst graphic with multiple points, containing the word 'BAM!' in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font with a black outline.

**Differentiate in
delivering services**

Libraries are for users



Get out of the scriptorium...



Go and save souls



Turn non-users into users

Turn users into super users

Every staff member is about getting users to act and act NOW!

Where are we going?



~~Libraries~~

~~Books~~

~~Reading~~

~~Research~~

~~Information Literacy~~

GET SMARTER

GET A'S

GET PUBLISHED

GET TENURE

EARN ACADEMIC RESPECT

MANAGE PERSONAL FINANCES

Market to the insecurities of your customers

“I’m here on a mission of mercy”



Selectors
Subject Specialists
Outreach librarians
Liaisons
Embedded librarians
Campus engagement

Libraries manage campus outreach with all the sophistication of a Girl Scout cookie drive

Brushing Out the Blemishes



Make the Library the cosmetics counter of the campus



Prime space

Expert staff

High touch services



High Touch, High Value Services



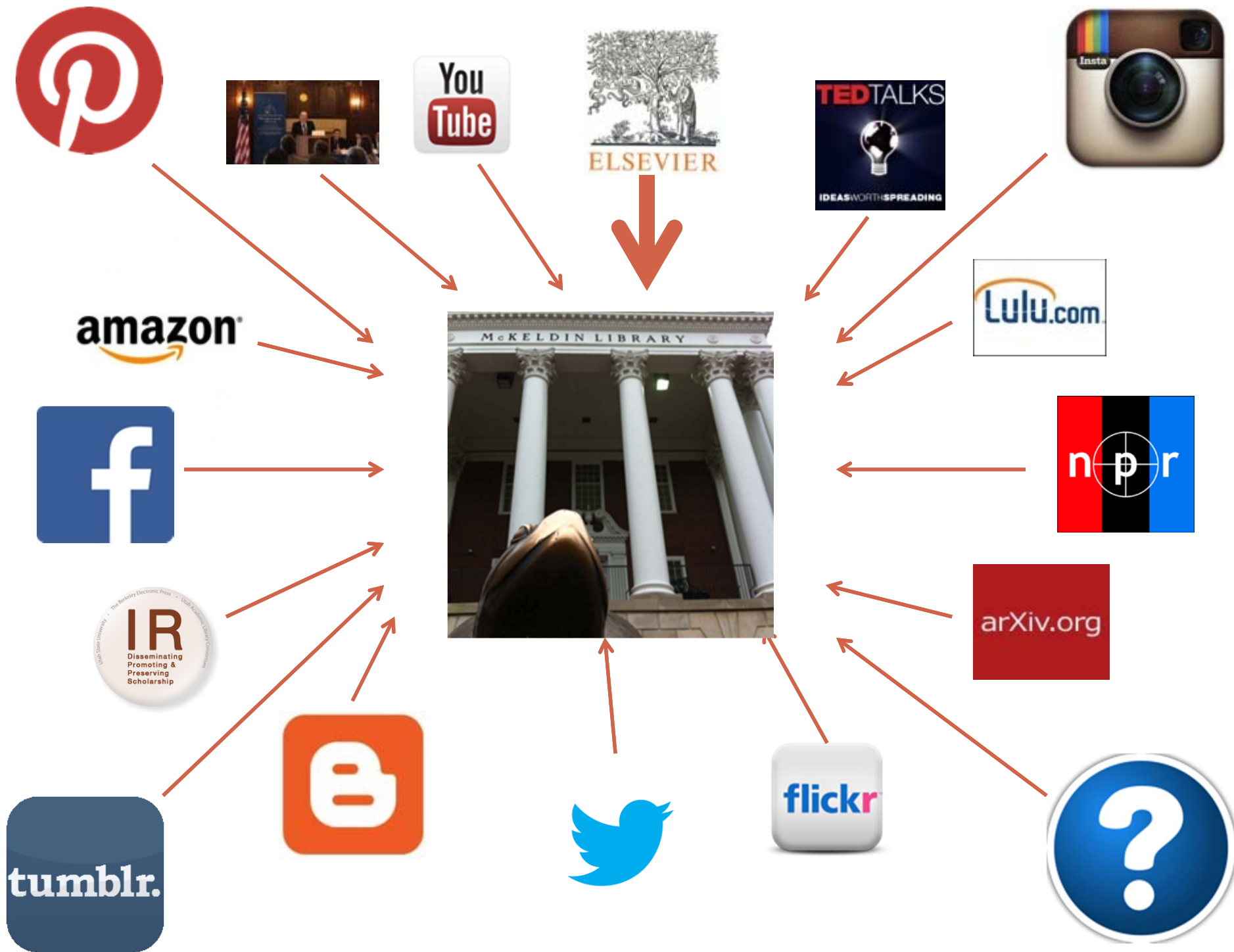
- **Publishing agent**
- **Dissertation counseling**
- **Tenure mentoring**
- **Academic Success Center**
- **Test preparation**
- **Job counseling**
- **Instructional technology support**
- **Presentation consulting**
- **Data management/analysis**
- **Grant seeking/management**
- **Financial literacy**



- **National brands**
- **Low margins**
- **Self-service**
- **Brands carried convey value to the store**



- **Specialty brands**
- **High margins**
- **Service oriented**
- **Store brand conveys value to the inventory**



Libraries need to compete for users



**Libraries are great
and useful
institutions, but
they are only
“useful” to the
extent that they are
ACTUALLY USED.**

Go forth and create USERS!



Everyone lives by selling something

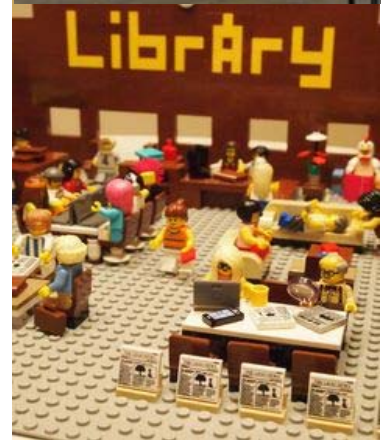
Embrace the role—make yourselves irresistible to users

Team up with your suppliers

Measure and celebrate successes

Fix the failures

Our products are content and services. Our goal is help our customers succeed.



Cleaning House—some needed fixes



- **Define a customer-centric mission:**
e.g., ensure that campus constituents achieve their academic aspirations
- **Set measurable goals:**
e.g., increase use of pre-1996 STEM journal backfiles by 5%
- **Convert librarians from buyers to sellers**
- **Redirect dollars from acquiring stuff to acquiring customers**
- **Revisit librarian skills, management, incentives and accountability in the context of customer satisfaction**



**The secret to
winning
librarianship:**

Score points with users

Guard against unnecessary costs

Your turn... finally!





The Committee on Institutional Cooperation is an academic consortium of 15 top-tier research universities, including the members of the Big Ten Conference and the University of Chicago. For over half a century, CIC members have collaborated to advance their academic missions, generate unique opportunities for students and faculty, and serve the common good by sharing expertise, leveraging campus resources, and creating innovative programming.

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